THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) During the year 2006-07, the Government authorized the State Trading Corporation (STC) to import 55 lakh tons of wheat. Accordingly, STC had finalized five international tenders as per the following details:

S. No.	Tender Date	Contracted Quantity (in Lakh MTs)	Weighted Average C & F (FO) Price (in US $ per MT)
1.	10-02-2006	5	178.75
2.	08-05-2006	8	191.388
3.	12-06-2006	22	197.817
4.	27-07-2006	3.3	210.72
5.	30-08-2006	16.7	228.94
	Grand Total	55.0	205.31

(b) *Vide* Notification No. 97/2006-Cus dated September 9,2006 of Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance, the *ad-valorem* duty rates of wheat were reduced to 'NIL' rate of duty for private companies under Open General License (OGL). Zero duty imports under OGL, have been extended by the Government up to 31st December, 2007.

(c) The reasons for exempting private companies for importing duty free wheat was to encourage private companies to import to ensure adequacy of supply and stability in prices.

(d)As per data received from Dte. of PPQ & S, Faridabad, 9.37 lakh tonnes of wheat has been imported by private companies as on 3-5-2007 at Chennai, Tuticorin, Mangalore, Mumbai, Vishakhapatnam and Cochin ports from Canada, Australia, Hungry, Ukraine, Russia, France, Kazakhstan, Bulgaria and Pakistan.

Food Security

4021. SHRI EKANATH K.THAKUR :Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a significant part of the country is still struggling to get two square meals even as our country is the second fastest growing economy;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the percentage of those rural households who are not having enough food everyday in some months is highest in West Bengal, 10.6 per cent, followed by Orissa, 4.8 per cent and Assam 3.6 per cent; and

(c) if so, the steps Government propose to take to ensure that all people in the country get enough food daily ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) No, Sir. On the basis of the results of National Sample Survey (NSS) 61st Round (2004-05), survey data on household consumer expenditure Report No. 512(61/1.0/5) conducted by National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO), it is seen that, in rural as well as urban areas members of households getting enough food throughout the year has increased. Also, the number of households in which members were not getting enough food has decreased.

(b) In the Report conducted by National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO), it has been estimated that the percentage of households not getting enough food every day in any month of the year is 1.3% in West Bengal, 1.3% in Orissa and 0,6% in Assam.

(c) For ensuring food security particularly to the poor citizens, the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) is being operated. The TPDS is primarily focused to cover the Below Poverty Line (BPL) families. The poorest of the poor among them are covered specifically under the Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY). Foodgrains are being distributed at highly subsidized prices to BPL and AAY poor families all over the country under the TPDS @ 35 kg per household per month. Foodgrains are also being distributed to States and Union Territories for different sections of societies under several welfare schemes.

In addition to above the open market also takes care of the food needs of citizens. The Government keeps a continuous watch on the food situation and whenever there arise situations of shortage, the Government intervenes to import food items and makes them available in the market to augment supplies.